

## Iran's brutal Evin Prison

### American pastor released from solitary confinement

**TEHRAN (BP and local reports)** — Saeed Abedini, the American pastor imprisoned in Iran for his faith, has been released from solitary confinement — “a direct result of the multitudes praying,” his wife told the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) on May 9.

“Our sources in Iran have

confirmed that Iranian authorities returned Pastor Saeed to his cell in Ward 350 yesterday,” said ACLJ, which represents Abedini’s wife and two children living in the United States.

The pastor was placed in solitary confinement, described as a “small, dark hole,” on April 29, and reportedly spent his 33rd

birthday there on May 7 even as 52,000 letters of encouragement were en route to him from concerned citizens mainly in the United States.

Though many will rejoice that Abedini, a U.S. citizen of Iranian descent, is no longer confined alone, Jordan Sekulow, ACLJ’s executive director, noted that the pastor remains captive in a brutal Tehran prison and suffers internal bleeding from repeated beatings.

see SOLITARY on p. 9

## National group urges Scouts to vote down homosexual policy proposal

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — Stand with Scouts, a national simulcast by the Family Research Council (FRC), urged viewers to preserve Scouting’s traditional values by opposing a policy change to allow youth who identify themselves as gay to become Scouts.

Organizers said the online simulcast’s purpose May 5 was to provide information about the significance of the proposed change and how people can get involved.

The proposed policy, unanimously recommended by the Boy Scouts Executive Committee, states in part, “No youth may be denied membership in the Boy Scouts of America on the basis of sexual orientation or preference alone.” The matter will be put to a vote by Scouting’s 1,432 voting members at the national convention May 23 in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

John Stemberger, an attorney and Eagle Scout, told FRC President Tony Perkins the pol-

icy change would “devastate” Scouting.

Stemberger is the founder of OnMyHonor.net, which describes itself as a “nationwide coalition of concerned parents, Scout leaders, Scouting donors, Eagle Scouts and other members of the Boy Scouts of America who are united in their support of Scouting’s current membership policies and their opposition to the proposed resolution which requires open homosexuality in the Boy Scouts.”

After he and Perkins encouraged people to pray for the May 23 vote and the delegates, Stemberger set forth a three-part strategy to connect, network, and rally.

People can connect by signing up for e-mail alerts at [www.OnMyHonor.net](http://www.OnMyHonor.net). The site offers 10 ways they can get involved to make a difference, and its resources include an open letter

see PROPOSAL on p. 8

## Federal court sides with embattled Holly Springs church plant

By Tony Martin  
Associate Editor

Holly Springs native Telsa DeBerry has a vision for an urban ministry in his hometown, but it seems the city’s administration — even his uncle, the mayor — is determined to prevent that from happening. The City of Holly Springs has even gone as far as saddling the Opulent Life Church with requirements that apply only to churches.

Final  
Part of a  
Two-Part  
Series

Telsa and the congregation were at a crossroads. Despite their best efforts to reason with the city over its unfair treatment, they believed more and more obstacles were being thrown in their path.

“We retained the services of Liberty Institute, an organization that takes on causes dealing with religious freedom. Hiram Sasser, their director of litigation, took on the case. He was shocked that this was happening and he came down, surveyed the situation, and took on the cause pro bono.”

“Sasser sent the city a letter, and we thought that when the city was notified that the ordinance was in conflict with federal law [The Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act — RLUIPA], that would take care of it. We were trying to avert any kind of legal proceedings, but the city wouldn’t change course.”

“The city was obstinate, so we had to file suit in federal court,” DeBerry continues. “The district court in Oxford ruled in favor of the city — interestingly enough, without even hearing the city’s argument. The city had seven days to file their brief, but instead the judge ruled against us. That had nothing to do with our rights. If I’m one person, don’t I have the right to exist? We had 18 – 20 people meeting regularly in a space that could hold 40, and they said that our rights weren’t being violated.”

“Next, our lawyers filed with the Fifth Circuit,” DeBerry says. “The Fifth Circuit ruled in the church’s favor in August 2012, but the night before the Fifth Circuit hearing the city revamped the ordinance and took that verbiage out. We had secured a location on the city square, but then

the city’s ordinance covered the whole city. Now, after changing the wording, the new ordinance said categorically that there were to be no churches on the town square. The new ordinance went directly against us.”

“This had been dragging on for over a year,” DeBerry continues. “The court saw through this ploy. The Fifth Circuit didn’t want to rule on this new ordinance until the lower court ruled. It was remanded back to the lower court in the fall of 2012. The judge was upset with our lawyers that we didn’t come to the lower court first and refile in his court. This next time around, he ruled in favor of us at a hearing.”

“The city didn’t present much of anything. We were headed toward a trial date in April of 2013, but our lawyers were able to reach a settlement with the city, in which they were to have to reimburse the church and the legal team for expenses.”

Even though the city has technically lost the case, there are still hurdles. “We are still meeting in the Marshall Baptist Center,” DeBerry said. “Legally, the city can’t stop us [from meeting downtown]. Now, however, they are saying we have to meet the fire code. We’re to have a sprinkler system installed in this

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## From the editor

WILLIAM PERKINS

### 'It would rain fetuses and blood.'

**A**bortionist Kermit Barron Gosnell was convicted earlier this week on a breathtaking number of charges in connection with the ghastly abortion clinic he owned in Philadelphia, including three counts of murder. Amazingly, there are still those among us who would defend abortion as some noble cause to benefit both a woman who doesn't want a child and a child who would otherwise be brought into an overcrowded and inhumane world.

Even more amazingly, these same people hold up as selfless heroes the butchers masquerading as doctors who would perform such a procedure on a desperate woman and her defenseless child.

When authorities raided Gosnell's abortion clinic in a search for illegal drug activity, they discovered a literal shop of horrors. Strewn about the clinic amid bloody recliners and unsanitary equipment, and clogging nearly every drain in the building, were human body parts — mangled pieces of unborn babies, actually — in various stages of decay.

The Pennsylvania State Department of Health, which along with other state agencies and licensing boards had been sitting on complaints about Gosnell since at least 2001, finally sprang into action. Horrifying doesn't begin to describe what they found.

Gosnell apparently did not even employ a licensed nurse at the clinic for long stretches of time. That didn't stop the abortions, however, as he ordered unqualified and unlicensed employees to administer narcotics and other drugs to the mothers. There are allegations that he allowed those same employees to perform abortions when he was not available.

One unlicensed employee of the clinic, a graduate of a medical school on the South American island of Grenada and himself convicted of numerous crimes at the clinic, testified that, "It would rain fetuses and blood."

Gosnell is also alleged to have delivered full-term, viable babies and then severed their spinal cords with a pair of scissors. For some twisted reason known only to Gosnell, he cut off the feet of unborn babies and kept them in jars around the clinic. A grand jury that investigated Gosnell and his operation described the clinic as a "baby charnel house."

Gosnell is hardly alone among the fraternity of abortion providers. Since abortion during all nine months of

gestation was legalized by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973, there have been thousands of reports of filthy clinics, violations of federal and state laws, barbaric acts committed on both mother and child, abortions performed on minors without parental permission, mistreatment of children born alive during botched abortions, unqualified employees perforating the mother's internal organs with sharp instruments, and coverups of questionable deaths, to name only a few of the outrages.

In many abortion clinics, there is a disassembly line in place where freshly aborted babies are handed over to employees of a third party company to be gutted and sold for their body parts. The ABC television network news show 20/20 several years ago exposed just such an operation, called Opening Lines, that provided fetal tissue and baby organs for experimentation.

Well-paid lawyers, lobbyists, and politicians with perfect hair and perfect teeth have tried to convince us since the beginning that abortion was not only necessary but often the only recourse. They have tried to convince us that abortion clinics are as sound as any other clinic, and that abortion doctors are a misunderstood and persecuted lot.

Inarguably, people who still support abortion after the Philadelphia trial revelations are the face of Kermit Gosnell. They permitted what he did in the name of abortion.

People who still support abortion must acknowledge they care nothing about what happens to women and children in this country. People who still support abortion must confess that they're okay with poorly regulated, disease-ridden clinics where it rains babies and blood. People who still support abortion have to admit they're okay with body parts being ripped from still-warm babies and sold for profit. They have to accept responsibility for these manifold inhuman acts, and so much more.

No doubt, they are satisfied with what happened in Philadelphia's "baby charnel house." That's just the kind of people they are.

**Editor's Note:** In last week's *From the Editor* commentary, an incorrect e-mail address was listed. For those interested in obtaining a copy of *Keeping Your Church Out of Court*, the correct address is [cvtaylor@mbcb.org](mailto:cvtaylor@mbcb.org). The Baptist Record regrets the error.

## After same sex marriage is legal

**W**hile the battle over same sex marriage still rages, it is hard to imagine what the next battle might be. However, astute observers of the marriage debate have already seen the newest challenge to the definition of marriage — polygamy.

In a recent article on Slate.com, New York City writer Jillian Keenan proposes that the legalization of polygamous marriage is a desired result of the current marriage debate. She argues, "While the Supreme Court and the rest of us are all focused on the human right of marriage equality, let's not forget that the fight doesn't end with same sex marriage. We need to legalize polygamy, too. Legalized polygamy in the United States is the constitutional, feminist, and sex-positive choice. More importantly, it would actually help protect, empower, and strengthen women, children, and families."

In addition, she believes feminists should support polygamy because it empowers women: "Finally, prohibiting polygamy on 'feminist' grounds — that these marriages are inherently degrading to the women involved — is misguided. The case for polygamy is, in fact, a feminist one and shows women the respect we deserve. Here's the thing: As women, we really can make our own choices. We just might choose things people don't like. If a woman wants to marry a man, that's great. If she wants to marry another woman, that's great too. If she wants to marry a hipster, well — I suppose that's the price of freedom. And if she wants to marry a man with three other wives, that's her ... choice."

At the end of her article, she gets down to the fundamental argument for why polygamy ought to be legalized. On this point, her logic is sound — I just disagree with her first premise. She declares: "The definition of marriage is plastic. Just like heterosexual marriage is no better or worse than homosexual marriage, marriage between two consenting adults is not inherently more, or less 'correct' than marriage among three (or four, or six) consenting adults. Though polygamists are a minority — a tiny minority, in fact — freedom has no value unless it extends to even the smallest and most marginalized groups among us. So let's fight for marriage equality until it extends to every same-sex couple in the United States — and then let's keep fighting. We're not done yet."

Keenan's entire argument is built upon



### Guest opinion with Evan Lenow

the idea that the definition of marriage is plastic. She believes it is constantly changing and must always expand to include the newest idea. This is the clear connection to the same sex marriage debate.

The current battle over marriage involves the definition of marriage. Proponents of same sex marriage (and supporters of polygamy) consider marriage to be an intimate, emotional relationship between individuals. They offer no basis for discrimination according to gender or number. Thus, the "new" definition of marriage would allow for same sex marriage and polygamy. If culture, and specifically the government, adopts this new definition of marriage, then Keenan is right. There will be no choice but to legalize polygamy as well as same sex marriage.

However, Keenan does not go far enough. Incest is the next step of progression. We could add to her argument above: "If a woman wants to marry a man, that's great. If she wants to marry another woman, that's great too. If she wants to marry a hipster, well — I suppose that's the price of freedom."

The next line should read: "If she even wants to marry her brother, that's her choice."

This is the direction of the debate. Keenan has opened the door and publicly stated what others have been ridiculed for saying. The definition of marriage matters. A redefinition of marriage will undermine the entire concept of marriage that has been recognized throughout human history.

If we tell people they can marry whomever they wish no matter the gender, number, or blood relationship, I suppose we could call that marriage. However, it changes the definition of what it means to be married.

*Lenow is assistant professor of ethics at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth. This column first appeared at [www.EvanLenow.com](http://www.EvanLenow.com). It appears here courtesy of Baptist Press.*

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# What turns good parents into outstanding parents?

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — Most Americans believe good mothers and fathers must be loving, supportive, and protecting, but fewer see the necessity of parents having a commitment to Christianity or religion, according to a LifeWay Research survey released on May 7.

The survey, conducted in March, gauged opinions of the expected roles of parents at a time when Americans typically begin giving thought to Mother's Day and Father's Day.

According to the survey, loving is the No. 1 characteristic deemed mandatory for mothers (85%) and fathers (79%). After loving, four of the next five characteristics are shared, including supporting, protecting, encouraging, and involved.

The consistency of what Americans expect of fathers and mothers is a sharp contrast to many of the popular storylines in films and books," said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research, pointing out the characteristic "fun" garnered consideration from just 57 and 54% for mothers and fathers, respectively.

"While a little more than half of Americans say mothers and fathers must be 'fun,' more people expect parents to be loving, supporting, encouraging, and understanding," McConnell said.

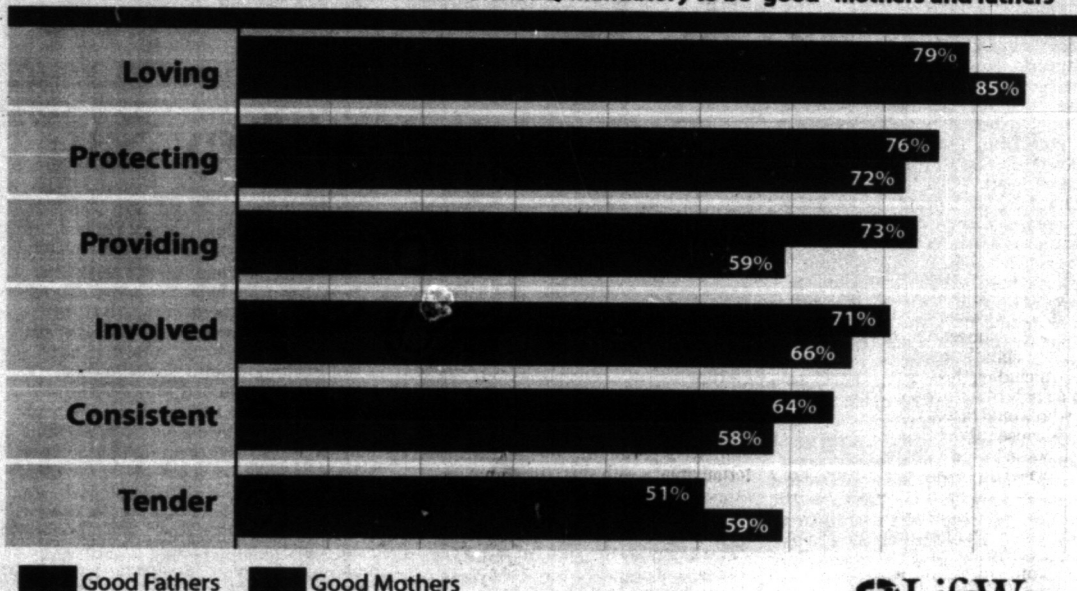
What Americans don't necessarily see as mandatory traits of good mothers and fathers are religious convictions, including being a committed Christian. For mothers (35%) and fathers (31%), being religious garnered a slightly higher return than being a committed Christian (26% for both mothers and fathers) on the survey of desired traits.

"Clearly Americans who are not Christians themselves would not be expected to value a Christian commitment among parents today," McConnell noted. "However, three out of four Americans indicate their religious preference is Christian, Catholic, or Protestant. This means only a third of these people appear to value parents modeling a commitment to Jesus Christ to their children.

"For many who indicate a Christian type religion, this preference simply reflects something they were born with

## Top differences in parental characteristics

American adults who consider these characteristics mandatory to be "good" mothers and fathers



LifeWayResearch.com

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rather than something they feel they must nurture in the next generation," McConnell explained.

According to the survey, Americans who self-identify as born-again, evangelical, fundamental Christians are less likely to select involved (60% vs. 68%) and generous (44% vs. 51%) and more likely to select religious (56% vs. 26%) as mandatory traits to be a good mother.

"Being a good father or mother is subjective. Yet in America today, the expectations are both high and consistent," McConnell said.

The LifeWay Research survey also reveals areas where expectations for mothers and fathers differ. More Americans expect mothers to be ten-

der and loving while the expectation for fathers more often is protecting, involved, consistent, and providing. While the average number of characteristics is the same for mothers and fathers, the survey also reveals women expect both mothers and fathers to have more of the characteristics.

LifeWay Research provided the following 16 characteristics to determine which ones Americans consider mandatory to be a good mother/father: Loving, supporting, protecting, encouraging, understanding, involved, trusting, teaching, tender, providing, consistent, fun, admitting mistakes, generous, religious, committed Christian.

"With such widespread expectations of parents today, the question rests less

on what is expected than on how parents can live up to these expectations," McConnell said. "Clearly, parents today need some support and encouragement of their own to consistently provide love and support to their children."

**Methodology:** LifeWay Research conducted the online survey of 1,054 adult Americans on March 25, among a sample of an online panel representing the adult population of the United States. Responses were weighted by region, age, ethnicity, gender and income. The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from the panel does not exceed plus or minus 3.1 percent. Margins of error are higher in subgroups.

## Tyndale House Publishers battles Obamacare to standstill

**WASHINGTON (BP)** — A leading Bible publisher won another court victory against the Obama administration's abortion/contraceptive mandate on May 3, thanks in part to the administration's own partial retreat in the case.

The publisher, Tyndale House, won a preliminary injunction in November from a lower court that prevented the government from enforcing the mandate, which forces businesses such as Tyndale to cover contraceptives that can cause chemical abortions.

The drugs often are called "emergency contraceptives" and can act after conception and implantation, and come

under brand names such as Plan B and ella.

The administration appealed that injunction to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, but eventually asked that the appeal be dismissed. The three justices on Friday granted the administration's request and dismissed it.

The injunction will remain in place while the case itself, *Tyndale House Publishers v. Sebelius*, moves forward. The lower court judge, Reggie B. Walton, had said in his November injunction ruling that Tyndale likely would win the overall case.

The legal group Alliance

Defending Freedom (ADF) says the government's desire to withdraw its own appeal is a good sign for religious liberty. ADF is representing Tyndale.

"Bible publishers should be free to do business according to the book that they publish," said ADF senior legal counsel Matt Bowman. "The government dismissed its appeal because it knows how ridiculous it sounds arguing that a Bible publisher isn't religious enough to qualify as a religious employer."

"For the government to say that a Bible publisher isn't religious is outrageous, and now the Obama administration has

had to retreat in court."

Tyndale is among the 25 for-profits that have obtained rulings in federal court. Of those, the for-profits have won injunctions against the administration in 19 cases, according to a tally by the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, placing the for-profits' record at 19-6.

In his November decision, Walton had said that forcing Tyndale to obey the mandate would also force it to violate its religious beliefs. "The contraceptive coverage mandate... places the plaintiffs in the untenable position of choosing either to violate their religious beliefs by providing

coverage of the contraceptives at issue or to subject their business to the continual risk of the imposition of enormous penalties for its noncompliance. ...Government action that creates such a Hobson's choice for the plaintiffs amply shows that the contraceptive coverage mandate substantially burdens the plaintiffs' religious exercise."

Although the Supreme Court upheld the health care law last summer, it did not address the issues in the Tyndale case. Tyndale, based in Carol Stream, Ill., with 260 full-time employees, functions as a thoroughly Christian organization, the ADF suit states.

The title of this article comes from a statement by Ezekiel, a great prophet of God who had a huge, compassionate heart for the people of God. In fact, as you read Ezekiel 3:15, it goes on to say that he came to the captives that had been taken away from their homeland. He sat down where they were sitting and there he remained for seven days. There is no mention that this great spokesman for God said anything. He just sat where they sat. He saw their plight. He felt the anguish of their hearts. He experienced the emptiness of their souls. He began to understand in a personalized way their longing to be where God wanted them to be and to be back in their homeland. "I sat where they sat."

Obviously, Ezekiel was a prophet with a pastor's heart. While there were great needs among God's people, he longed not just to preach to them but to fully understand and as best he could feel all that they were going through. It is a great thing for a pastor to have that loving and longing concern of heart to share with their people not only wisdom and words but their feelings and compassion. I rejoice and am so blessed to see that dimension in so many of our fine pastors across our state. I would long for that to be in my own life also. In fact, it is not just for pastors it is for everyone. It is for Sunday School teachers and leaders, and friends and folks who know the Lord. The Apostle Paul would write in Romans and say, "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them who weep" (Rom. 12:15). It is a spiritual dimension that flows through us when we actually experience sitting where they sit.

One of our outstanding pastors was sharing with me a beautiful practice he had in his own life as the pastor of a church. He



## I Sat Where They Sat

would go to the church building knowing no one was there. This caring shepherd knew where his people usually sat. He would go into the auditorium and move from seat to seat to seat, sitting and praying for them individually. Then he would pray for those who would possibly be visiting and for those who would come needing to know the Lord. All of us would be helped immensely if we would pause long enough to sit where they sit. Let me make just three quick suggestions.

**Sit where people sit economically.** I am fully aware that virtually no one knows what someone else is going through economically and financially. But when you stop and think about it, you may recognize simply by getting a glimpse of a part of their struggle you are able to understand their stress and maybe their sourness a little better. You may be able to do something to help, but on the other hand you may not

be able to do one thing to help change their financial condition. But just understanding where they are can enable you to treat them with a new care and concern and with a new level of tenderness.

**Let me suggest to you that you try sitting where they sit educationally.** Especially for pastors and teachers, it is important to have some sense of where people are so that you will be able to relate to them. It is probably the height of arrogance when people think that they are superior to other people because they know more or know something that other people do not know. The fact is that every person you see and everyone you know has knowledge of some things of which you are probably totally ignorant. A hard working member of my church was doing some work at our house fixing some plumbing issues. I told him, "I wish I knew how to do this kind of work." He looked at me funny

and said, "Well preacher, anybody can do this." I said, "Well, I can't. I do not know how in the world that you do what you do." He said, "Do you know all that it takes to be a good plumber?" I said, "No Sir." He said, "All that you have got to know is which way water runs and what day is payday." Well, I can tell you for a fact it takes some knowing beyond that.

I was talking to a man just the other day that was so faithful in his church, but he would not go to any of the Bible study sessions or attend Sunday School simply because he was such a poor reader. He was afraid that someone might call on him. It is extremely helpful in a thousand ways to know where people are educationally so that you can seek to relate to them with meaning and care.

**It is a tremendous thing to sit where people sit emotionally.** Sometimes terrible tragedy strikes a community or the congregation at large. We come to worship and the worship leaders try to turn the moment into a carnival atmosphere. They are not paying attention to the fact that there are families sitting in those seats before them whose houses were blown away, or whose family dwelling burned to the ground, or maybe they just received word that their son was killed serving in Iraq or Afghanistan.

It may not always be possible to know where people are in any of these areas. When we make the effort to seek to understand where they are, it changes the way we are. And maybe, just maybe if we make the effort to sit where they sit, they will do the same for us when we are sitting in a mess.

The author can be contacted at [directions@mbcb.org](mailto:directions@mbcb.org).

*the conventional wisdom:*

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## Just for the Record



**BOND CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA**, ordained Tim Cumberland as a deacon Apr. 14. Shown are Hugh Martin, Cumberland, and pastor Jason Clark.

Joey Smith was licensed to the gospel ministry Jan. 13 by **NEW LIBERTY CHURCH, SCOTT ASSOCIATION**. Shown are Denise Smith, Smith, and pastor Paul Smith.



The GAs of **CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, held a special program celebrating the GA 100 year celebration for all past, present, and future GAs of the church. GA leaders are Shirley Allen and Pam Wallace. Hal Hatten, pastor.

**CALVARY CHURCH, PRICEDALE**, ordained Blake Boyd and Matt Simpson as deacons. Shown are Mindy Boyd, Boyd, pastor Floyd Davis, Simpson, and Breann Simpson.



**FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, STATELINE**, recognized its 2013 graduates with a special program in which they all received Bibles, followed by a reception that night.



**BOVINA CHURCH, VICKSBURG**, honored their church secretary, Erma Hill, with a reception, plaque, and gift for 25 years of service. Chas Rowland, pastor.



Members of **PLEASANT RIDGE CHURCH, DUMAS**, have been crocheting sleeping mats for the homeless out of plastic bags. Once completed, the mats will be donated.

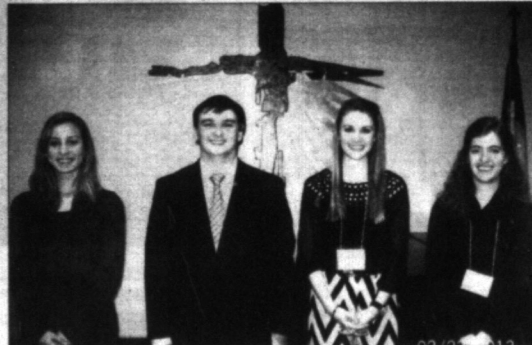
**PARKWAY CHURCH, KOSCIUSKO**, recognized and honored John Chaney, Jesse Crosby, Don Edwards, Joel Edwards, Charles Nowell, Buster Oliver, and Johnny Watson as deacon emeriti Mar. 24. Shown are Crosby, Joel Edwards, Don Edwards, and Oliver. Derrick Wilson, pastor.



**GRACEWOOD CHURCH, SOUTHAVEN**, is now the first Mississippi F.A.I.T.H. Riders Chapter. F.A.I.T.H. Riders is a national church based motorcycle ministry. The Gracewood chapter held their commissioning service Apr. 28.



**FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, MATHISTON**, held a baby dedication Apr. 28. Shown are the children and their families. Ralph Cain, pastor.



The State Keyboard Festival was held in the chapel of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board February 23. Students participating were awarded summer scholarships based on their scores of Superior. Shown are Rachel Baker, Pinelake Church, Brandon; Lane Williamson, West Heights Church, Pontotoc; McKenzie Garrison, Piney Grove Church, Randolph; and Gabriella Loiancano, Church of the Good Shepherd, Pass Christian.

## Just for the Record

**LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, POPE**, recently held graduate recognition services honoring the class of 2013. Shown are Chad Williams, Savannah Williams, Hunter Smith, Ashleigh Smith, Zachary Sellers, Amber Anderson, and pastor Jay Anderson.



**PARKWAY CHURCH KOSCIUSKO**, licensed Daniel Fortenberry to the ministry Mar. 24. Shown are Tony, Harley, Diane, and Daniel Fortenberry and pastor Derrick Wilson.



The children of **CALVARY CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, presented a musical program for the patients at the Haven Hall nursing home. Danny Creel, music minister, directed the children. Hal Hatten, pastor.



**CONCORD CHURCH, BENTON-TIPPAH ASSOCIATION**, awarded the 2013 Gerald C. Mauney Scholarship to Gabriel Dence, senior at Blue Mountain College and a BSU summer missionary to California. Shown are Gerald Mauney's parents, T.C. and Juanita Mauney, Dence, and Robert E. Walker, pastor.

The children's choir of **GOOD-WATER CHURCH, MEEHAN**, presented the musical I Can Only Imagine Apr. 28. Sandy Johnson and Amy Rogers, leaders.



**SAND HILL CHURCH, JONES ASSOCIATION**, honored John C. Hilburn Apr. 20-21 in recognition of 65 years of ministry. Hilburn was treated to a reception Saturday, and Sunday was set aside as John C. Hilburn Day, with special music, poems, scripture, special presentations from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, the Jones Association, and Sand Hill Church.

### In other Church News:

➤ **First Church, Lake**, will be hosting a retirement reception for Ken and Matt McLemore for 30 years of service June 2, 1-4 p.m.



**NEW LIBERTY CHURCH, SCOTT ASSOCIATION**, licensed DeAnna McCurdy into the music ministry July 22, 2012. Shown are McCurdy and pastor Paul Smith.



The GAs of **ARLINGTON CHURCH, BOGUE CHITTO**, attended Mission Madness at First Church, Crystal Springs, Apr. 20.



**FIRST CHURCH, HICKORY FLAT**, ordained Allen Tatum as deacon Apr. 28. Shown are pastor Gary Linville, Jason Fly, Tatum, and John Paul Bumpas.



**MEMBERS OF PLEASANT RIDGE CHURCH, WOODLAND**, built handicap ramps to the front of the church and fellowship hall. Shown are Wade Mathis, Oliver Nelson, George Washington, Lewis Easter, and Bruce Pepper.



## College News



Thirty-one students were inducted into the **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** chapter of Sigma Beta Delta International Honor Society for Business, Management, and Administration on April 13. Students who were able to attend the ceremony were (first row, left to right) Stella McIver, Columbia; Jessica Pierce, Hattiesburg; Belinda Gandy, Hattiesburg; Shelby Kellogg, Hattiesburg; Shelly Autmon, Ocean Springs; Tiffany Smith, Gulfport; Mallory Batte, Mount Olive; (back row, left to right) Michael Gelsinger, Gulfport; Robert Higdon, Gulfport; Eric Smith, Biloxi; Brandon Blakeney, Laurel; Eleftherios "Lefty" Lazaridis, Katerini, Greece; Patrick Earley, Raceland, La.; Stefan Sartori, Belgrade, Serbia; Terry Ferrell, Ocean Springs; and Brett Stewart, Laurel.



**WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** held a 50-Year Alumni Luncheon at noon in the Student Conference Center on Friday, April 12. At the luncheon, Cindy Cofield, alumni director at WCU, Tommy King, president, recognized alumni from the class of 1963 and presented them with a medallion. Pictured are the 1963 alumni with (far right) King.

**MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE** inducted several alumni into the MC Sports Hall of Fame. Shown, from left, are 2013 inductees and leaders Brenda Phillips Smith, Robert Street, Chad Altmyer, Athletic Director Mike Jones; Scott Waterbury, Renee Brown Sumlin, Gene Smith, and Harry Upton.



**WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** hosted the Bivocational and Small Church Leadership Network (BSCLN) National Celebration April 18-20. The conference, titled Networking with the Iron Men, included numerous meetings, lectures, music led by WCU's School of Music, breakout sessions, a banquet, and other social events. Program personalities included Philip Caples, professor of religion at Caskey Divinity School of Louisiana College, Pineville, La.; Bobby and Pennie Clark, Abbott Baptist Church of Mansfield, Ark.; Tim Dowdy, pastor of Eagle's Landing First Baptist Church, McDonough, Ga.; Don Dunavent, pastor of Clarksdale Baptist Church; Jim Futral, executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Convention; Sammy Gilbreath, director of evangelism for the Alabama Board of Missions; Ray Gilder, BSCLN National coordinator from McMinnville, Tenn.; Kenny Heath, associational missionary of Western Baptist Association of Cumberland, MD; Tommy King, president of WCU, and Joe Young, pastor and MRM coordinator from Charleston. Shown are Gilder and Suzanne and Randy Davis.

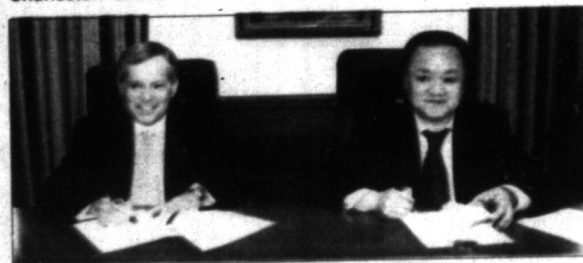
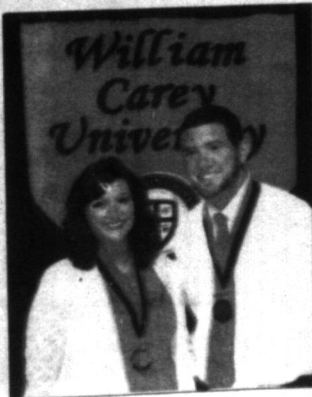


Tommy King, president of **WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY**, is shown welcoming everyone to Honors Day Convocation held on April 24 in Smith Auditorium. This annual event honors students and faculty for their achievements, while also recognizing scholarship donors and recipients. Numerous awards were given and scholarships and achievements recognized.



**WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY'S** Frank Baugh, assistant professor of psychology and behavioral medicine, dean of the School of Natural and Behavioral Sciences, and graduate dean, and (sitting) Courtney Lauren Daley of Carson, a senior psychology major were chosen as honorees of the 2013 Higher Education Appreciation Day - Working for Academic Excellence (HEADWAE) program. HEADWAE was established by the Mississippi Legislature to recognize outstanding students and faculty in Mississippi's colleges and universities.

**WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY** students Courtney Lauren Daley of Carson and Patrick Earley of Raceland, La., received the Jenkins - Chastain Citizenship Award at WCU's 2013 Honors Convocation on April 24. The highest honor given by the university, it recognizes students who have made the most significant contributions to student and campus life in exemplifying those qualities of citizenship upheld by the university.



**MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE** president Lee Royce recently signed an agreement with Hubei Polytechnic University in China that opens the door for faculty and student exchanges between the two institutions. The partnership documents were signed during brief ceremonies at Alumni Hall on the Clinton campus on April 30 as a delegation from the 20,000-student Chinese university was on hand. Vice President Qingyun Wang signed papers for his institution in China. Shown are Royce and Wang.





## Staff Changes



**FIRST CHURCH, MOUNT OLIVE,** has called Bob Phillips as pastor. He and his wife Susan, shown, come from Homes of Hope for Children in Purvis. He has pastored churches in Louisiana and West Virginia, and served as a church planter in Vermont. They have three grown children who live in North Carolina and Texas and have one grandchild.

### In other Staff News:

► **Mark McDaniel, Decatur,** is available for pulpit supply. He was pastor of Grace United Church for six years and has been in ministry for 37 years. For in-

formation, call (601) 635-2835.

► **Al Green, First Church, Bay St. Louis,** is retiring as pastor. He and his wife, Emily, will be given a retirement reception at the church May 19, 6 p.m.

## Submission Guidelines

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either e-mail, CD or DVD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

## SOLITARY

cont. from p. 1

"The severity of his medical condition remains a concern as he began complaining of symptoms of kidney issues before he was placed in solitary confinement," Sekulow wrote May 9.

Sekulow did not know the fate of the nine other prisoners who also were placed in solitary confinement in Evin prison after a peaceful protest over the lack of medical care received by Abedini and others.

Previous reports indicated care was being denied because Abedini as a Christian is considered "unclean."

"We are hopeful that Pastor Saeed's early return to the general population of Ward 350 is a sign that international pressure on Iran is beginning to have an effect," Sekulow wrote.

Abedini's wife Naghme, who grew up mostly in the United States and lives with her family in Idaho, said his release from solitary confine-

ment "is a direct result of the multitudes praying."

"I am relieved my husband is out of solitary, but still I am deeply concerned about Saeed's health," Naghme Abedini said in a statement. "While this is a small victory, I am still demanding justice be done and that Saeed be released."

More than 575,000 people have signed a petition for Abedini's release at SaveSaeed.org, and his case continues to receive international attention.

"All of this has led to unparalleled pressure on the Iranian regime," Sekulow wrote. "The more pressure is placed on Iran — the more Iran is put on notice that the world is watching its unconscionable human rights abuses — the regime is forced to take action."

The Mississippi Legislature in its 2013 regular session passed a resolution calling for Abedini's release. The Iranians continue to imprison Christians on a variety of charges.

## COURT

cont. from p. 1

building. That's a \$35,000 investment in a building we are only leasing for five years.

"The city says they're using the 2006 International Fire Code standard. Based on this standard, we are considered an assembly, and if our occupancy is over 300 people, we have to have a sprinkler system. They base this on square footage.

There are three ways to figure the occupancy of this space. Based on our building usage, with chairs and tables and so forth, our occupancy will only be about 279 people. But their numbers, based on their perception of our use, comes out to 407 people. They are negotiating the very policy they shared with us. Our lawyers have sent them a letter to that effect, and that's where we are today.

"Spiritually, the biggest obstacle and the biggest hurdle I deal with here is simply 'religion,' people who go to church and are going to hell along with it. Religion is the biggest obstacle in being in a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ," he asserts.

Johnny Ervin, director of church planting for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board in Jackson, said the convention has provided funding for Opulent Life Church through the Margaret Lackey State Mission Offering.

"Several months ago, I spent some time with Telsa in Holly Springs. It was during our trip around town that I began to grasp the depth of his concern for his home town as well as his unwavering principles.

"I knew the story of him not being afraid to take on the community's leaders even though it might not go well for him. Listening to the reason why he felt compelled to stand up for the church — because his community would never prosper with the laws against the church that were on the books — gave me a new appreciation of what courage looks like in our culture today.

"Telsa is not afraid to do what God leads him to do. I am so thankful that God provides leaders like Telsa DeBerry with the faith to stand firm for Jesus and His Church in a culture that has moved so far from God we have trouble believing this is America."

Neither Holly Springs Mayor Andre DeBerry nor the city's five members of the Board of Aldermen responded to individual e-mail requests from The Baptist Record seeking comment on the Opulent Life Church case.

For now, Opulent Life Church and its pastor are committed to fighting for the vision that God has given them. Like the Apostles Peter and John as they faced the all-powerful officials of their day, DeBerry believes he and the church answer to a higher authority (Acts 5:27-29).

Stay tuned. It's going to get interesting.

Editor's note: Telsa DeBerry can be contacted at opulentlifepastor@gmail.com.

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**FOC OF PEARL IS LOOKING FOR A PART-TIME CHILDREN'S MINISTER.** Contact Pastor Scott Crawford at [Scottcrawford01@msn.com](mailto:Scottcrawford01@msn.com)

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MCCLAIN, MS IS CURRENTLY SEEKING A PASTOR.** Resumes may be sent to FBC of McLain, Pastor Search Committee, P.O. 69, McLain, MS 39456. For further information concerning: pastoralism, size of church, salary package, etc., contact Mr. Ross Liles at 601-749-1985

**FBC OF MARION (NEAR MERIDIAN) IS SEEKING A PART-TIME MINISTRY ASSISTANT.** If interested, contact Pastor Drew Dabbs ([drew\\_dabbs@yahoo.com](mailto:drew_dabbs@yahoo.com)).

**FBC OF MARION (NEAR MERIDIAN) IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL MUSIC MINISTER.** If interested, contact Pastor Drew Dabbs ([drew\\_dabbs@yahoo.com](mailto:drew_dabbs@yahoo.com)).

**MINISTER OF MUSIC (PART-TIME) SERVING THE LORD JESUS AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LUMBERTON, MS** 30 minutes south of Hattiesburg to lead Worship and Sanctuary Choir on Sundays; start a Wednesday Youth Choir, then Worship at Prayer Meeting, then Choir Practice. Call Bro. John Sapp 601.463.9800

**LIBERTY BAPTIST CHURCH, FLOWOOD, MS IS SEEKING A MINISTER TO CHILDREN & FAMILIES.** Resumes may be emailed to [office@lbcflowood.org](mailto:office@lbcflowood.org), or mailed to Children's Search Team, 5199 Lakeland Dr. Flowood, MS 39232.

**SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH, TYLERTOWN, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL (PART-TIME) MINISTER OF MUSIC.** Please Send Resume to [dawn95@yahoo.com](mailto:dawn95@yahoo.com) or contact Dan @ (601) 303-0116.

**MAIN STREET BAPTIST CHURCH IN GOODMAN, MISSISSIPPI IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR.** Send resumes to 9857 Main Street, Goodman, Mississippi 39079

**YOUTH PASTOR/DIRECTOR/MINISTER/COORDINATOR.** Denomination: Southern Baptist. First Baptist Church Collinsville, MS is seeking a full-time Youth Pastor; see [ypsc@fbc.com](mailto:ypsc@fbc.com) for further details.

**GUNTER ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, FLORENCE, MS IS SEEKING A BI-VOCATIONAL PASTOR.** Please send resumes to [rdclukes@bellsouth.net](mailto:rdclukes@bellsouth.net). If mailing please send to 2209 Woodland Place, Florence, MS 39073



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



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## GIFTS OF HONOR AND MEMORY

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

**JANUARY 16-31, 2013**

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## Look for Spiritual Excellence • Titus 2:1-15

We recently examined biblical requirements for Deacons and Elders. Other texts were addressed to Timothy, a young pastor. Many will say these texts do not apply to me, since I am neither a pastor nor a deacon. This week, however, is for you.

This passage applies to all adult believers: older men, older women, younger men, younger women, and employees. The instructions challenge each age group or segment to live with integrity as a believer.

To older men, Titus was to teach them to be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience (Titus 2:2, all Scriptures New King James). The Greek word translated sober also means self-controlled, as in not controlled by liquor or drugs. Reverent means honorable or dignified. Temperate means sensible. Older men must also be sound in faith, love, and patience. The word for sound also means in good health. So we older men must have a healthy love and faith. The word patience also means endurance. Therefore, Paul told Titus to teach the older men to have a healthy faith, not a sick one; a correct love, and to keep on keeping on. Good advice for us older men.

The older women, which is very few of

you reading this, were taught to "be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things — that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed," Titus 2:3-5. Notice that Titus was not to instruct the young women, but the older women were to teach them. Good advice.

The older women were taught to be reverent in behavior, or have a holy demeanor. They were prohibited from speaking evil of others, which seems to be a temptation older women fight. This word for slanderers also means accusers. The Devil also has this title, so women are warned about this action with strong words. They were taught not to be given to much wine. The word actually means made a slave. They also were encouraged

to teach good things. So their influence must be good.

The younger women were to be taught by the older women to love their husbands and children. That means the younger women do not already know how and that this is learned behavior. They were taught to be discreet, which also means self-controlled. The word translated chaste also

means pure and holy. They are to be good homemakers, the Scripture reads. Then few women worked outside the home as

### Explore the Bible

with Rick Henson



they do today. Young women who work are still instructed to do well in the home.

Young women were taught to become subject to their husbands so that God's word is not defamed. That means that people judge the validity of God's word by how believers act. Jesus said this previously in John 13:35, "By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Young men had the most commands. They were taught to be self-controlled as the young women, the same Greek word used for both. They were to offer themselves as a pattern of good works, a model for others. They were to have integrity in their doctrine, live with dignity and be moral men. They also were to use healthy words that shame those who oppose the gospel. What wife would not want to be subject to such a godly man?

Since we do not have slavery in America, no matter how you feel about your work, let's apply these commands to how we behave at work. Workers are to obey the boss. The verb literally means to be subject. Employees must strive to do well in all things, this Scripture teaches. It also teaches that we watch what we say to the boss. Good advice. Workers were then told to be responsible with what is given to us that we may wear the teachings of God (See Ephesians 4:21-24).

Whatever your position in the church, whether young or old, male or female, we are all called to live with integrity and represent Christ at work, at home, and at play. May we each bring honor to His name.

Henson is pastor of Oakdale Church, Brandon.

## Becoming a Person Others Need • Proverbs 6: 6-11, 16-19, 23-27

Martin Luther is credited with saying "You can't stop the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from making a nest in your hair." Daily, we face decisions that test our moral fiber. Temptations to choose the wrong paths are like those birds overhead. Keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus (see Hebrews 12:1-2) can prevent the "nest-building" process.

This third study of the "Extraordinary Relationships" series (from Proverbs) challenges us to consider three character traits that will benefit both us and others (and especially those dear to us): diligence, integrity, and purity. Good traits strengthen relationships; bad ones tear them down. What impact is your character having on those who know you?

A diligent work ethic is exemplified by the lowly ant (Prov. 6:6-8). The lazy person is told to "observe its ways and be wise" (vs. 6 HCSB). Without an overseer, the tiny insect makes good use of its days, ascertaining its needs will be met in time of plenty and in want. The one who shirks responsibility in lieu of spending too much time resting and sleeping is warned to change his ways, or poverty and need will sneak up on him like a bandit.

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might," says the writer of Ecclesiastes (9:10 NIV). The New Tes-

tament promotes this teaching as well. Paul said, "we gave you this rule: If a man will not work, he shall not eat" (2 Thess. 3:10 NIV). Being a good and faithful employee honors God in the workplace, and prevents one from being a burden to others (of course, a workaholic is not to be highly-esteemed; a good sense of balance is required). We would do well to impress this virtue on our children at an early age.

Demonstrating integrity is highlighted in verses 16-19 of our focal passage. Solomon lists seven negative actions and character traits that the Lord finds detestable. In the NIV Matthew Henry Commentary, the author explains: "God hates every sin. But there are some sins which he does in a special manner hate; and all those here mentioned are such as are injurious to our neighbor." The list begins with "haughty eyes" (vs. 17 NIV). "Pride is the first, because it is at the bottom of much sin," says Henry. The list includes lying, shedding innocent blood, and planning wicked schemes; it ends with causing

factions in relationships: stirring up "dissension among brothers" (vs. 19 NIV).

These negative traits are readily seen in the world today. Believers are to avoid such. Having integrity will cause us to seek the reverse of these: modeling humility, truthfulness and forgiveness, and being an encourager and a peacemaker. James reminds us that we're "to keep [ourselves] from being polluted by the world" (James 1:27 NIV). Persons of integrity are an asset to their family and their community.

Thirdly, we're to seek lives of purity. In Proverbs 6:20-23, Solomon

exhorts his son to continually recall and heed his parents' teachings. Holding to the Lord's commands gives power to stand against sexual sin. The son is warned about the smooth talk and alluring eyes of the adulterous woman. Seemingly innocent flirtations can be the first step down the road to ruin.

Paul tells young Timothy things to run from and others to run toward: "Flee the evil desires of youth, and

pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace," (2 Tim. 2:22 NIV). And uncontrolled "evil desires" can lead not only to physical sexual sin, but mental adultery as well; Jesus clearly warned: "anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28 NIV). With the internet giving easy access to the pornography plethora, one can be trapped in his or her own home by this family-destroyer. In a Baptist Press article ("Confronting the Scourge of Pornography"), Barrett Duke says this ensnarement causes "isolation from members of the opposite sex and the loss of relationships that give meaning to life." Marriages are decimated by resulting feelings of betrayal and insecurity, and loss of genuine intimacy, the author adds. "Can a man embrace fire and his clothes not be burned?" Solomon rhetorically asks (Prov. 6:27 HCSB).

Pursuing diligence, integrity and purity requires constant vigilance. "Be serious! Be alert!" as Satan is "looking for anyone he can devour" (1 Peter 5:8 HCSB). However, victory can be assured by having God's armor in position (Ephesians 6:10-18) and His word in our heart (Psalm 119:11).

Maniscalco is a member of LeMoyné Boulevard Church, Biloxi.

### Bible Studies for Life

with Ann Maniscalco



## Revivals & Homecomings

► **Lucien Church, Franklin Association:** Homecoming, May 19; services, 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner on the ground; Owen King, speaker;

Aaron and Amy Walker, music; Carroll Walker, pastor.

► **Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth:** Homecoming, May 19; Perrys in concert, 10 a.m.

► **Caseyville Church, Lauderdale County:** Homecoming, May 19; service, 11 a.m., followed by lunch; Jessie Napp, speaker; Ryan Moore, pastor.

► **Fellowship Church, Meridian:** Revival, May 19 - 22; 6:30 p.m. nightly; Phil Winningham, speaker; Chris Lee, mu-

sic; Corey Fontan, pastor.

► **Liberty Church, Newton:** Revival, May 19 - 22; Sun., 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon. - Wed., 7 p.m.; Nick Holden, speaker; Gary Thorne and Jeff Hardy, music.

► **Bellevue Church, Pontotoc County:** Homecoming, May

19; services, 11 a.m., followed by fellowship meal; Brett Williams, speaker; Tommy Inmon, pastor.

► **New Providence Church, Hazlehurst:** Revival, May 19 - 22; meal each evening, 6 p.m.; services, 7 p.m.; Brad Moak, speaker.

# Bible Drill



**FIRST CHURCH, TUPELO,** recognizes its student Bible drillers: Madison Young, Ben Russell, and Lauren Pugh (nine-year participant.)



**FIRST CHURCH, EUPORA:** Shown are youth drillers Greer Blaylock, Madeline Mixon, Parker Blaylock, Brad Blaylock, Drew Gray, and Micah Gray.



**COVENANT CHURCH, GEORGE-GREEN ASSOCIATION:** Aleshia Washington, Mason McLain, and Carey McLain.



**GOOD HOPE CHURCH, PRESTON,** recognizes it's Bible drillers: Marlee Parkes, Bridget Hunt, Jillian Gregory, Francis Gregory, Jane Patterson, Warner Parkes, Laura Beth Hailey, Bailey Gregory, and Madison Alford.



**MT. ZION CHURCH, FLORENCE,** recognizes its Bible drillers.: Jessie Broadwater, Amy Grantham, Beatty Sanders, Jasmine Scoggins, and Lizzie Williams.



**HARMONY CHURCH, WINSTON COUNTY:** Shown are student drillers Jessie Roeland, Victoria Burton, Ashley Luke, Karla Higginbotham, Kenzie Rogers, and Ashely Higginbotham; and children's drillers Emily Luke and Travis Stevenson.



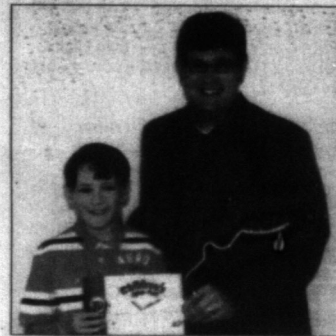
**ENON CHURCH, JAYESS:** Shown are youth drillers Samantha Stauffer, C.J. Stauffer, Evan McEwen, and Ethan Hedden. Melissa Stauffer and Rochelle Boyd, leaders.



**NEW PROVIDENCE, COPIAH ASSOCIATION:** Shown are youth drillers Autumn Twiner, Chet Twiner, J.C. Twiner, Jonathan Twiner, Jasmine Twiner, and Zech Brown.



**SILVER CREEK CHURCH, MCCOMB:** Will McElveen, Katelynn Blackwell, Jackson Fortenberry, and leader Gail Hall.



**MT. OLIVET CHURCH, SCOTT COUNTY,** recognizes Bible driller Ethan Crain, shown with pastor Bruce Robinson.



**BEULAH CHURCH, DECATUR:** Shown are drillers Lacye Harrison, Monica Culpepper, Grant Estes, Britney Murphee, Nathan Kelly, Heston Harrison, and Graham Murphee. Barbara J. Harrison, Nicole Bryan, and Suzanne Gressett, leaders.



**LONE OAK CHURCH, ALCORN ASSOCIATION,** recognizes its Bible drillers: Tannar Marlar and Gage Killingsworth.